

# alzheimer's association™

## Minnesota-North Dakota Support Group Newsletter

Published quarterly for our Support Group Facilitators  
And their attendees.

November 2007

[www.alzmdak.org](http://www.alzmdak.org)

1 800 232 0851



President Reagan signs a proclamation in 1983 making November Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

## November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

### CareSource: new resources for care

November is both National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and National Family Caregivers Month. This year, the Alzheimer's Association is introducing CareSource™, an easy-to-use, one-stop resource for everything you need to know about finding and planning for care for a person with Alzheimer's.

CareSource's new online suite of services will help coordinate assistance from family and friends, locate senior housing and receive customized care recommendations.

Lotsa Helping Hands — This interactive calendar allows anyone involved in care or support to log onto one convenient, private site and organize caregiving activities. It's easy to post dates and times for duties others have agreed to share, such as preparing meals, providing rides, running errands or keeping the person with dementia company.

Alzheimer's Association Senior Housing FinderSM — Powered by SNAPforSeniors®, the Senior Housing Finder is the first online nationwide database for locating dementia care. The tool allows you to search for licensed senior housing by geographic area, housing type, availability and level of dementia care offered.

Alzheimer's Association CareFinder™ helps you identify dementia care options to best meet an individual's needs and preferences. CareFinder helps you recognize good care, communicate effectively with care providers and learn about care payment sources.

Other resources include message boards for sharing with others who face similar challenges and links to programs for improving caregiver skills.

You can find CareSource resources at [www.alz.org/CareSource](http://www.alz.org/CareSource). For more information, call the Alzheimer's Association at 1.800.272.3900.

I have included a press release in this email to send to local papers. Angie

## New Resources Now Available Through Green-Field Library

The Alzheimer's Association Green-Field Library is the nation's largest Alzheimer's library. The library is housed at the national office and is part of the Program and Community Services division. The library offers many information services to chapter volunteers, staff, board members, and the public and also produces many online publications.

**The Best of the Best**— Through documents put together by the Green-Field library we have access to the most authoritative websites on topics related to Alzheimer's Disease. You can access these resources online through our Support Group website:

[www.alzmdak.org/sg](http://www.alzmdak.org/sg)

A thorough resource list can also be found on our National website at:

[http://www.alz.org/  
we\\_can\\_help\\_resource\\_lists.asp](http://www.alz.org/we_can_help_resource_lists.asp)

**Support Group Facilitator  
Training will be held on November 5th  
From 1:00-5:00pm at the Assisi Heights  
Building in Rochester.**

**Please call Angie for more information  
or to find out when a training may be  
held in your region: 952.857.0522**

**We Can Help  
1.800.272.3900  
[www.alzmdak.org](http://www.alzmdak.org)**

## Help and Hope: Information and Resources About Memory Loss

## Study Focuses on Possible Alzheimer's Blood Test

**Alzheimer's Disease**, the most common form of dementia, affect approximately 5 million people in the United States-110,000 in Minnesota and North Dakota alone. Nearly 50% of those 85 and older are affected. By 2050, an estimated 14 million people in the U.S. could be diagnosed with this progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys a person's memory and ability to learn, reason, make judgments, communicate and carry out daily activities. The Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota will continue to provide individuals, families and care partners with help and hope until we live in a world without Alzheimer's disease.

**24/7 Information Helpline- 1-800-272-3900.** Our information and Referral telephone helpline is available to provide information, support, printed materials and referrals to area resources. This service is available for anyone with Alzheimer's or related disorders and their family and professional care partners. Interpreters are available in more than 60 languages.

**Family Education.** We offer dementia-specific workshops and conferences throughout our region. The workshops include topics on understanding memory loss, communication, partnering with your doctor and Savvy Caregiver, which are appropriate for persons with dementia and their care partners.

**Support Groups.** We offer support groups led by trained facilitators for individuals and their care partners affected by Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. These groups provide support, assistance and encouragement to help manage and cope with the disease.

**Family and Professional Care Consultations.** Individualized assistance, problem solving and identification of resources are available to individuals with memory loss, and their professional and family care partners. This service is provided by trained dementia professionals and can be offered by phone or in-person to address dementia issues that may arise throughout the individual's experience with the disease.

**Professional Education.** We offer classes, workshops and conferences to enhance the skills of professional caregivers and health care professionals caring for individuals with dementia.

**Advocacy.** With our nation Association, we advocate on the federal level for increased funding for research to find a cure. Nationally and locally, we advocate for legislation aimed at providing better care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. To become an Alzheimer's advocate please visit our website at [www.alzmnndak.org](http://www.alzmnndak.org).

**Research.** Since its inception, the Alzheimer's Association nationally has invested more than \$165 million to support Alzheimer research. We annually support continues research funding.

**Safe Return.** We offer our national Safe Return program for those with dementia who may wander and become lost.

More information about the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota's programs and services, as well as additional resources for individual, families and caregivers, is available at [www.alzmnndak.org](http://www.alzmnndak.org) or by calling 1-800-272-3900.

One of the most distressing aspects of Alzheimer's disease is the difficulty in determining whether mild memory problems are the beginning of an inevitable mental decline. Researchers at the Stanford University School of Medicine have developed a blood test that is a step toward giving people an answer two to six years in advance of the onset of the disease.

The test identifies changes in a handful of proteins in blood plasma that cells use to convey messages to one another. The research team discovered a connection between shifts in the cells' dialog and the changes in the brain accompanying Alzheimer's. They found that the blood test could indicate who had Alzheimer's with 90 percent agreement with clinical diagnoses, and could predict the onset of Alzheimer's two to six years before symptoms appeared. "Just as a psychiatrist can conclude a lot of things by listening to the words of a patient, so by 'listening' to different proteins we are measuring whether something is going wrong in the cells," said Tony Wyss-Coray, PhD, associate professor of neurology and neurological sciences and senior author of the study.

"I really think it has enormous potential," said Lennart Mucke, MD, director and senior investigator of the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease at the University of California-San Francisco, who did not participate in the study. "Most researchers in this field agree that there is an urgent need for better lab tests for Alzheimer's disease, and this study has addressed this need admirably."

Currently, the clinical diagnosis for Alzheimer's is one of exclusion - by testing for other causes of memory loss and cognitive declines, such as stroke, tumors and alcoholism. If those conditions are eliminated as causes of memory loss, what remains is Alzheimer's, which is the most common cause of dementia. Even the clinical diagnosis is imperfect, and the only definitive diagnosis is by brain autopsy after a person has died.

The study will appear in the Oct. 15 advance online edition of *Nature Medicine*.

The Alzheimer's Association It is very important to develop a simple test for Alzheimer's - such as a blood test. Especially one that would help us track the course of the disease, and perhaps even show who is at higher risk or predict who will get the disease. The data presented in the *Nature Medicine* paper represent an intriguing initial report on this possible diagnostic technology for Alzheimer's disease. However, it is hard to judge the promise of the technology at this early point in its development. A very important next step is for the results to be replicated by independent labs in other populations and ethnic groups worldwide.

Stanford University Medical Center (2007, October 15). Blood Test Takes Step Toward Predicting Alzheimer's Risk. *ScienceDaily*





## The “Advocacy in Action” Corner

*Advocate action is needed now to make sure that all Presidential candidates understand that Alzheimer's disease is the health care crisis of the 21st century.*

Presidential candidates are now presenting their health care plans. Unfortunately, none of them address Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's disease is a huge health issue that Presidential candidates need to specifically address.

Alzheimer advocates and advocates from many other health groups have been working in the four early primary states (IA, NH, NV, SC) to make health care a defining issue for the 2008 presidential campaign - and they have been successful!

**Email the Presidential candidates today!**

From our Election 08 webpage, you can email each of the Presidential candidates.

**<http://www.alz.org/election08>**

1. Click on a link to a candidate. You will be sent to a web form or email form.
2. Ask them : What is your action plan is for combating the Alzheimer epidemic?
3. Tell them: Why Alzheimer's matters to you. [Include a personal story]

**This is your chance to become involved!**

**Learn how to become involved and make your VOICE heard.**

**The Alzheimer's Association of MN-ND will be holding “Advocates in Action” training from**

**3pm-5pm on November 15th.**

**Call Angie at 952-857-0522 to register.**

If you are interested in becoming an Alzheimer's Advocate and cannot make the training, you can register online at [www.alzmnndak.org](http://www.alzmnndak.org) on the “Advocacy” page For more information email me at [Angie.Bizal@alz.org](mailto:Angie.Bizal@alz.org).

## Fall Announcements

### **There is A Bridge Documentary**

With more than 5 million Americans affected by Alzheimer's disease today, and that number rapidly growing as Baby Boomers age, a new documentary, There is a Bridge, reveals different ways of communicating with those who have dementia and explores how these emotionally profound relationships can change our lives.

There Is a Bridge, which premieres on public television stations nationwide beginning September 1, 2007 (check local listings), challenges conventional notions of people with Alzheimer's as "unreachable" and this disease as "the first of two deaths." Interviews with preeminent thinkers and poignant footage of family members, care partners, and school-children building emotionally rich relationships with people with dementia illuminates depths of memory and personal identity not erased by Alzheimer's disease.

Hosted by former United States Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, There Is a Bridge explores the deep, complex nature of human solidarity by weaving together mental health, psychology, art, philosophy and education to highlight individuals and path-breaking programs reaching out to elders affected by Alzheimer's. Produced in 2007 by Michael Verde, founder and president of Memory Bridge: Foundation for Alzheimer's and Cultural Memory, and directed by Ted Kay, There Is a Bridge is supplied by TMK Productions and presented by American Public Television through the Exchange service at no cost to public television stations nationwide.

There Is a Bridge is available on DVD for \$34.95 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. To order, call: 888-616-6767, or order online at:

<http://www.memorybridge.org>.

Local Airtimes:

KSMN-20, Worthington, MN -- Sun 11-4-07, 3:00 PM

KWCM-10, Appleton, MN -- Sun 11-4-07, 3:00 PM

TPT17 (KTCI), St. Paul, MN -- Wed 11-28-07, 7:00 PM

### **Alzheimer's Association will benefit from Herberger's Community Day!**

Community Day is a fund-raising event for all 501c3 nonprofit and school organizations. The event is designed to provide local nonprofit organizations with a fun and easy way to raise money for the participating nonprofit. The Alzheimer's Association invites you to participate in Community Day by purchasing a coupon booklet.

#### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Participating organizations sell coupon booklets to the public for \$5 each, keeping 100% of the proceeds! Each booklet contains coupons valid during the Community Day One Day Sale on November 10th.

#### **WHAT WILL CUSTOMERS RECEIVE IN EACH BOOKLET?**

With each \$5 coupon booklet purchase, customers receive:

One \$10 coupon, good toward any item of \$10 or more (exclusions apply)  
Eight additional coupons, each good for up to 20% off one item (exclusions apply) - in addition to our special One Day Sale prices. See the sample booklet .

**For more information, visit the: Community Day Web site.**

**[www.communitydayevent.com/](http://www.communitydayevent.com/)**

**To purchase a coupon book, please call 952.830.0512 or e-mail [ashley.snell@alz.org](mailto:ashley.snell@alz.org).**

## Community and Family Education Opportunities

### **North Dakota**

#### After the Diagnosis

November 8, 2007 6:30-7:30pm

MeritCare 801 N. Broadway Fargo, ND Cafeteria Room

Call Gretchen for more information 701.277.9757

### **Metro Area**

#### Partnering With Your Doctor

November 1, 2007 6:30-8:30pm

North Memorial Hospital 3300 Oakdale Ave N Robbinsdale

Ridgeview Conference Room. Please call 952.857.0538 to

register.

#### Legal Planning Issues

November 8, 2007 6:30-8:30pm

North Memorial Hospital 3300 Oakdale Ave N Robbinsdale

Ridgeview Conference Room. Please call 952.857.0538 to

register.

#### Financial Planning Issues

November 15, 2007 6:30-8:30pm

North Memorial Hospital 3300 Oakdale Ave N Robbinsdale

Ridgeview Conference Room. Please call 952.857.0538 to

register.

#### Savvy Caregiver Workshop

Length: 12 hours (Six 2-hour sessions)

Mondays, October 29-December 3, 2007 6:30-8:30pm

Alzheimer's Association Office

4550 W. 77th Avenue S Suite 200 Edina, MN

Please call 952.857.0538 to register.

#### Memory Loss and Aging

November 7th, 2007 1:00-2:00pm

Westonka Library 2079 Commerce Blvd

Mound, MN Call 952-847-6175 to register.

November 10th, 2007 10:30am-12:00pm

Oxboro Library 8801 Portland Avenue S

Bloomington, MN Call 952-847-5775 to register

November 14th, 2007 6:00-8:00pm

Golden Valley Library 835 Winnetka Ave N

Golden Valley, MN Call 952-847-5475 to register

#### Memory Loss and Aging cont.

November 27th, 2007 7:00-8:00pm

Ridgedale Library 12601 Ridgedale Drive

Minnetonka Call 952-847-8800 to register

### **Western Minnesota**

#### Maintain Your Brain

November 13th, 2007 2:00-3:30pm

Benet Place South 1975 15th Ave SE

Saint Cloud, MN Call 320-650-3070 for more information

November 13th, 2007 6:30-8:00pm

Granite Falls-Call 320-650-3070 for more information

November 20th, 2007 6:30-8:00pm

Montevideo Call 320-650-3070 for more information

#### Memory Loss and Normal Aging

November 19th, 2007 10:00-11:30am

Salem Lutheran Church 90 Riverside Drive SE

Saint Cloud, MN Call 320-650-3070 for more information

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### **Visit our Support Group Facilitator Website**

The Alzheimer's Association has designed a website specifically for you as Support Group Facilitators.

You can find links to attendance forms and marketing flyers, information for Support Group Attendees, information on Green-Field Library, and much more!

[www.alzmdak.org/sg](http://www.alzmdak.org/sg)

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### **Green-Field Library News Update**

Updated information regarding steps to request resources from Green-Field can be found online at [www.alzmdak.org/sg](http://www.alzmdak.org/sg)

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